

CONDUCTED BY THE  
INTERNATIONAL CITY MANAGERS' ASSOCIATION

1313 East 60 Street, Chicago 37, Illinois

Report No. 187

August, 1959

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## THE PEDESTRIAN MALL AND THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

*What does the downtown pedestrian mall mean to the city government? Will it be an effective urban answer to competing shopping centers? How far should government go to promote downtown revitalization?*

The pedestrian mall has captured the imaginations of people across the country. Newspaper and magazine editors have given considerable space to sketches, photographs, and articles dealing with proposals to revitalize the downtown areas of individual cities.

These articles are usually based on reports of city planners. And while the pedestrian mall to the layman might seem visionary in concept, sweeping in import, and doubtful of execution, the planning is based in the main on sound, rational experience. One reaction might be, "I'll never see it in my town in my lifetime," but there are indications that the concept of pedestrian malls is gaining support. Particularly in large cities, hard-headed businessmen and financiers have taken the lead in promoting downtown revitalization.<sup>1</sup>

In many cities the Central Business District (CBD) has lost its dominant economic position in the past decade; many people feel that something dramatic must be done to win back that dominant role for downtown. Comprehensive city planning, with emphasis on downtown improvement, is viewed as the first step toward this goal.

Generally overlooked by the public is this foundation on which mall proposals rest. This is partly a result of publicity given to trial malls. While a few mall experiments have been serious attempts to evaluate the effects of motor vehicle elimination, others have been merely retail trade promotion schemes with no purpose except to stimulate spring or late summer sales.

The serious experiments and numerous planning studies that have led to comprehensive mall proposals have all been based not only on physical improvements, but on traffic diversion, improvement of mass transit and automobile parking, and consolidation of land uses as well. No serious planner has said that a pedestrian mall could be successful without this foundation. For example, a recent report of the Miami, Florida, Department of Engineering lists 10 recommendations for CBD improvement. Significantly, it is the 10th which suggests "a pedestrian reserve area or mall in the five-block area of greatest pedestrian activity—decorated and landscaped into a focal point of downtown interest."

The implications of downtown renewal, of which pedestrian malls are but a part, are tremendous. For here is a high-value district—in most cities *the* high-value district—which may be deteriorating under various corrosive influences. Here is the core area whose relationship with its surrounding area has changed, mostly for the worse, in the past 15 years. Here is the heart which now must beat faster to overcome hardening of the arteries.<sup>2</sup>

The downtown mall directly affects the mercantile community. Dealing with this articulate and knowledgeable group always presents delicate questions for the municipal chief administrator. The

<sup>1</sup>A *New York Times* series of articles, July 3 through July 7, 1959, discusses leadership of such interests in Minneapolis, Dallas, Kansas City (Missouri), Louisville, and Baltimore.

<sup>2</sup>Medical terms are frequently used to describe downtown deterioration. A typical observation about "downtownitis" is that it requires "surgery," not aspirin tablets.



city government—businessman relationship in the case of downtown malls may be particularly difficult. For while there may be general agreement on elements of the “big picture” such as improving mass transit, increasing parking facilities, and diverting traffic which does not generate business, there is evidence that the business community—particularly in smaller cities—is divided and uncertain about the wisdom of pedestrian malls.<sup>3</sup>

This report discusses the wide range of pedestrian mall proposals advanced in various cities, the experiences of cities which have experimented with malls, and the ground rules which have been set up in a few cities to cover city government participation.

Most of the information for this report was obtained directly from 37 cities: Covina, Fresno, Modesto, Palo Alto, and Richmond, California; Boulder, Colorado; Hollywood, Florida; Atlanta, Georgia; Evanston, Peoria, Rock Island, and Waukegan, Illinois; Des Moines, Iowa; Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Portland, Maine; Boston, Massachusetts; Flint, Grand Haven, Kalamazoo, and Royal Oak, Michigan; Peekskill and Rochester, New York; Mooresville and Raleigh, North Carolina; Baltimore, Maryland; Akron, Cincinnati, Oberlin, and Toledo, Ohio; Grants Pass and Springfield, Oregon; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Dallas and Waco, Texas; Alexandria, Virginia; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Windsor, Ontario, Canada.

### The Downtown Problem

Malls have been proposed by many sources. It may be that the idea takes hold after a downtown businessman visits one of the European cities where pedestrian ways have been in use for some time. But more often proposals have come from professional planners, either members of municipal planning staffs or consultants. Increasingly, the planner has been hired by a private group. Sometimes the cost is shared by the city and the businessmen.<sup>4</sup> Whatever the source of the planning study, its motivation has been an acute awareness of the “downtown problem.”

The downtown problem is, of course, not one problem but a combination of many. Obsolete buildings, congested traffic, and factors associated with the exodus of large numbers of people to the suburbs since World War II are generally prevalent.

The CBD, which in the past had to compete with CBD's in cities some distance away, suddenly has new competition from suburban shopping centers as well. And the CBD must compete under a handicap since shopping centers were designed to avoid adverse downtown conditions. CBD planning has been directed at ameliorating these conditions.

The Shopping Center. The automobile has made possible the suburban shopping center. The chain store, the branch department store, and the supermarket have gone to the shopping center as population has shifted to outlying areas.

Planners have set up three categories of shopping centers, a distinction not necessary here. For purposes of this report a shopping center will be a commercial development of any size built within the past two decades outside the CBD and posing a competitive threat to the CBD. In a large metropolitan area a shopping center may be one of 60 or more stores in a suburban community many miles from the CBD. In a small community surrounded by an agricultural area, the shopping center may comprise a Sears Roebuck or similar store, a supermarket, and/or a variety store just outside the city limits. A shopping center then is a new facility which increases substantially the amount of floor space devoted to retail use in any trade area and one which can draw a fair percentage of business which otherwise would fall to the CBD.

As early as 1955, the threat came from approximately 250 planned shopping centers with at least 20 stores each.<sup>5</sup> It affected established business districts in this way:

<sup>3</sup> The publicity given trial malls has resulted in merchants anticipating such proposals. For example, Covina, California, recently conducted a CBD survey. Among merchant comments were these conflicting opinions:

“Remodel old buildings . . . widen the street or make a mall out of it, increase parking lots.”

“Please do not make a mall out of this area and take traffic off the street as I believe it would kill the area entirely.”

<sup>4</sup> Covina's (\$12,000) study is financed 50 per cent by the federal government; 25 per cent by the city government; and 25 per cent by the Uptown Merchants' Division, Covina Chamber of Commerce.

<sup>5</sup> Mabel Walker, “The Impact of Outlying Shopping Centers on Central Business Districts,” *Public Management*, August, 1957, pp. 170-174.



1. Non-Downtown Stores. Nine large department stores closed in New York City alone, most of them in Lower Manhattan, Brooklyn, and the Bronx. The pattern was discernible in other cities; often it seemed that old urban, but not central core stores would be the major victims of shopping center-CBD competition.

This is demonstrated by a survey of a secondary shopping area in Detroit where the city has been concerned about its 45,000 small business and commercial establishments. The Mayor's Committee for Industrial and Commercial Development, through a random sample poll of 16,000 persons living in areas contiguous to the East Jefferson shopping area, found: "Two-thirds of the respondents do not consider East Jefferson as their normal shopping area when shopping for nonfood items. The main competitors are downtown and a regional shopping center."<sup>6</sup>

2. Old Suburban CBD's. Many cities with CBD's are components of large metropolitan areas. For example, Richmond, California, has long had to compete with CBD's in San Francisco, Oakland, and Berkeley. Now two shopping centers in outlying areas have spurred CBD revitalization in the community. Of the effects on smaller cities of less than 100,000 population, many of which are in such metropolitan CBD's, the Urban Land Institute says, "The problem of economic decline is one facing central business districts of the smaller cities more than the larger ones."<sup>7</sup>

3. CBD's of Large Cities. A study of retail sales figures for the nation's 48 largest metropolitan areas for the years 1948 to 1954 showed that not one of their CBD's kept pace with the metropolitan area of which it was a part. Thirty-three CBD's showed sales increases, and 15 showed declines. While the total sales in all 48 cities showed a gain of 1.6 per cent, the over-all gain for the 48 metropolitan areas was 32.3 per cent.<sup>8</sup> Obviously, the growth has come outside the CBD.

Shopping center competition has spurred downtown thinking about the downtown problem. This is clear from information supplied by cities surveyed. For example, Mooresville, North Carolina, whose central business district competes with that of Charlotte 26 miles away, says a proposed suburban shopping center at Charlotte influenced its downtown improvement program. A new shopping center and another under construction was listed by Richmond, California, as one of its reasons for accelerating downtown planning.

Buying Habits. An understanding of the CBD's role in its metropolitan area requires a distinction between two types of stores; those offering convenience goods and those offering shoppers goods. Convenience goods are those such as groceries, drugs, hardware, and gasoline which are required more frequently. Shoppers goods include apparel, jewelry, furniture, and other household goods — generally speaking, those purchased less frequently. Neighborhood and community business centers in both the city or suburbs tend to be dominated by convenience goods stores. Regional shopping centers and central business districts tend to offer both types of stores, although the larger the central business district the more likely it is to offer a greater proportion of shoppers goods stores.

There also are variances between large and small cities: "Shoppers in cities of less than 40,000 population are largely dependent upon the downtown for both convenience and shopping goods; shopping trips in the larger urban areas display a more dispersed pattern, with the central business district predominantly a shopping goods center."<sup>9</sup>

Nature of CBD. The downtown problem is not confined simply to new retail competition, however. It is also related to the physical limitations of the CBD and the attitudes of people doing business there. The more important of these factors are:

1. Street Patterns. Business districts, as a rule, developed along streets laid out with no particular regard for the use of land. Much of the urban renewal programs in larger cities involves correction of street pattern and size deficiencies.

<sup>6</sup> Richard L. Nelson and Frederick T. Aschman, *Conservation and Rehabilitation of Major Shopping Districts*. (Washington, D. C.: Urban Land Institute, 1954), p. 6.

<sup>7</sup> *American Municipal News*, June 30, 1959. p. I.

<sup>8</sup> Walker, *op. cit.*

<sup>9</sup> Alan M. Vorhees, with Gordon B. Sharpe and J. T. Stegmaier, *Shopping Habits and Travel Patterns*, (Washington, D. C.: Urban Land Institute, 1955), p. 25.



2. Traffic. As a rule, downtown streets have been called upon to handle both through traffic and that generated by the CBD itself.<sup>10</sup>

3. Physical Deterioration. Stores in older downtown sections may no longer provide comfortable shopping or room for adequate display to the increasing variety of goods on the market. In some cities, vacant upper floors point up the shift away from multilevel stores.

4. Absentee Ownership. CBD's ownership is fragmented, while shopping center management, as a realty venture, is concentrated. This makes concerted action by the business community more difficult because more people must agree on a unified course of action.

5. Mixed Land Uses. Study after study has shown that CBD's have harmful mixed land use. While downtown offices and other commercial activity may complement retail use by generating employee shopping, other nonretail activity generates truck traffic, noise, and other nuisances which work to the detriment of the CBD district. A noncomplementary land use, such as industrial, may be a barrier to expansion of a retail area.

6. Parking. Merchants tend to blame their problems on just one factor — lack of adequate parking. While CBD parking spaces have increased, the CBD generally does not offer the ease and convenience of parking found at suburban shopping centers.

7. Lack of Room for Expansion. CBD's tend to be confined to certain narrow limits by residential and industrial properties thus making expansion of the business district too costly. The flight of certain shopper's goods stores may be explained in part by the lack of room for them to grow downtown. It has been cheaper to develop in suburbs than attempt to cut into the circle of blight around many downtown areas.

8. Appearance. CBD's have been noticeably lacking in aesthetic qualities, particularly in the smaller cities. Downtown areas are barren of trees and all too often present a jumble of signs.

### The Mall Concept

The mall planner asserts, as a basic assumption, that separation of people and automobiles will permit real physical and aesthetic amenities, thus putting the CBD in a better position to compete with shopping centers and other CBD's. By making it easy to bring the car downtown, and to park it on the fringe of the mall area, maximum use will be made of the automobile. On a congested downtown street the car is no good anyway. A shopper has to walk into a store in order to buy; so why not make this walk pleasant?

History of Malls. The concept of an area set aside for pedestrians is not new. Greek and Roman designers built arcades — covered walk areas. A crude variant of the arcade may be seen almost any day on television. The typical Western features a town with covered sidewalks to protect pedestrians from sun and rain. Covered sidewalks have disappeared from general use in cities since the turn of the century, but it is significant that many regional shopping centers have covered walkways.

Before World War II, the effective separation of areas for the exclusive use of pedestrians was demonstrated by Rockefeller Center in New York and by Maiden Lane in San Francisco.

Moreover, the idea took hold in European cities which were bombed out during the War. Rotterdam and Coventry to mention just two, rebuilt their devastated CBD's so that pedestrian and vehicle were effectively separated. These malls have been generally successful, and at a time when European planners have become increasingly concerned with increased automobile use. Restrictions on vehicles in older portions of cities are being tried by European communities which find themselves with the "downtown problem."

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<sup>10</sup>One Pennsylvania city, for example, has seven numbered state and federal highways passing through it. In all, it has 11 major roads radiating from its central business district. An origin and destination survey disclosed, not surprisingly, that almost 60 per cent of the vehicles moving through streets in the 12-square block central business district did not start or end their trips there.



*Public Management* (March, 1958) described one of the pioneer European efforts this way:

Two streets in the central business district of Essen, Germany (688,000), are completely closed to vehicular traffic during daytime hours to accommodate shoppers. Kettwiger Strasse, running in a north-south direction, is entirely closed off for a length of 527 feet at the southern end from the hours of 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. During the night after 7:00 p.m. vehicles are allowed to enter the street only for the purpose of loading and unloading goods. Limbecker Strasse, 984 feet in length, is closed to all types of vehicles 24 hours a day. The pickup and delivery of merchandise must be done at the rear of shops and stores by using parallel streets for access. In the shorter northern part of Limbecker Strasse, 164 feet in length, vehicles are allowed to enter the street only for loading and unloading between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. The plan has won support and cooperation from merchants and other businessmen in the area, and the city has provided off-street parking in near-by areas to accommodate shoppers.

While it is fair to say that European experience with the pedestrian mall is being closely observed by American planners, proposals have utilized largely the experiences of suburban shopping centers. Increasingly, retail trade revitalization is being spoken of as making the CBD an in-town shopping center (as in a huge Portland, Oregon, development), with all or most of the amenities given suburban shopping center customers — principally close-in parking and easy movement of customers from store to store.

Downtown Advantages. The CBD district, despite the erosion of its strength, is not without resources. A shoppers' motivation study in three cities<sup>11</sup> indicated the downtown area has advantages over shopping center in 16 of 23 categories about which shoppers were questioned. The first three, in order of importance, were: (1) Large selection of goods, (2) several errands may be done at one time, and (3) lower prices. Appendix A summarizes a similar study of shopper motivation in Portland, Maine.

"Downtown" in most cities is more than a retail area. Being central, it draws on the entire area for customers. And it is also an area of substantial employment and commercial and other activity.

"Downtown" can be psychological. For while the CBD's may be observing suburban shopping centers for clues to the future, at least one of the latter has looked to the CBD. The Chicago suburb of Park Forest, Illinois, has a large central shopping center with the name "Downtown Plaza" to distinguish it from smaller shopping centers that dot the community.

Downtown has advantages. Physical improvements, shopper conveniences, and aesthetic inducements are needed to capitalize on these advantages.

### The City and Its CBD

The city's stake in downtown property values requires that its officials watch the downtown, be alert to opportunities to improve those values where consistent with public policy, and to take leadership *to the extent possible*. Downtown's importance to its city is underscored by its role in the municipal tax structure and as an employment center.

CBD Revenues. While there has been a trend toward a broader municipal tax base, the property tax still ranks at or near the top as a revenue producer for cities. Severe disruption of the property tax base would rumble through any community like an earthquake. Typically, the CBD includes upwards of 20 per cent of the assessed valuation of a well-balanced city. But, the earthquake may be near where its warning signs are in evidence — vacant stores and assessments substantially higher than current sales prices. A shift to sales or business taxes is not the whole answer to reduced income from downtown property taxes because both of these taxes depend to a great degree on the downtown prosperity.

The CBD as An Employer. Some cities have been hit hard by industry's tendency to seek outlying open spaces for new plants and offices. These may be followed by business service offices,

<sup>11</sup> C. T. Jonassen, *The Shopping Center Versus Downtown*, (Columbus: Bureau of Business Research, Ohio State University, 1955), pp. 90-94. Intensively surveyed were Seattle, Washington; Houston, Texas; and Columbus, Ohio.



such as equipment rental or sales agencies. Parking and other downtown problems may send commercial activity such as the insurance agency and branch banks outward too. To the extent that such moves affect the ability of the city to be a place of employment, the entire city suffers.

**Municipal Services.** Downtown deterioration does not have merely an effect on the city's tax base. It is reflected directly in municipal costs in much the same way as residential slums. Traffic congestion requires municipal outlays for policemen and traffic engineering. Decaying properties present enforcement problems for building, fire, and housing officials. Thus, downtown deterioration is a two-edged sword. Not only does it affect the tax base, but surplus revenue from downtown tends to be diminished by the increasing cost of providing municipal services in that area.

**The CBD Challenge.** Because the trends cited above will have adverse effects on the city as a whole, if allowed to continue, city administrators are naturally concerned with the challenge of the CBD. Like many phases of government at the local level, the CBD problem requires cooperative efforts of the governing body, the chief administrator, the planner, and the individual citizen, but not on the usual scale. A total approach is needed to solve this problem. How it is solved may well determine what our cities will be like in the future. Downtown revitalization must establish new values in terms of municipal revenues and services and in terms of aesthetic satisfaction for the large proportion of citizens using the area.

### The Total Approach

The many proposals for downtown renewal, as mentioned earlier, have been both extensive and bold. The program for Akron, Ohio, is perhaps typical in this respect. "The mall is a small but integral part of a total redevelopment plan for the entire 306-acre Downtown area. . . . This plan as presently approved would replace over 75 per cent of the existing buildings and renew the remainder *in a period of 15 to 20 years.*" (Italics ours.) Figure 1 shows an artist's expression of how Downtown Kalamazoo, Michigan, will look if that city's plan is fully carried out.

It is not the purpose of this report to go into the mechanics of downtown planning. The chief administrator should be concerned, however, that planning is sound, whether done by city agencies or private groups.

It is common for downtown interests to finance redevelopment planning. Therefore, coordination with city planning activities is essential. A unique arrangement was reported by Fresno:

The consultants . . . have worked very closely with city personnel and with the local businessmen . . . [the consultants were] retained simultaneously under three separate contracts. One contract was with the city for detailing plans of the "central area" which includes some 1,900 acres. A second contract was with the Hundred Percenters (our local downtown businessmen's group) for more detailed consideration of the core, or true CBD of the city. It is somewhat arbitrary to say how much of the central area is involved in the core area, but it is probably between 100 and 200 acres. The consultants' third contract was with the redevelopment agency, involving preparation of a final project report for the downtown redevelopment project which comprises 36 acres within the core. While such a planning approach requires considerable coordinative efforts, all concerned feel that this is the only logical way to carry out planning for the downtown (assuming, as in the case of Fresno, that a general plan for a metropolitan area has already been adopted).

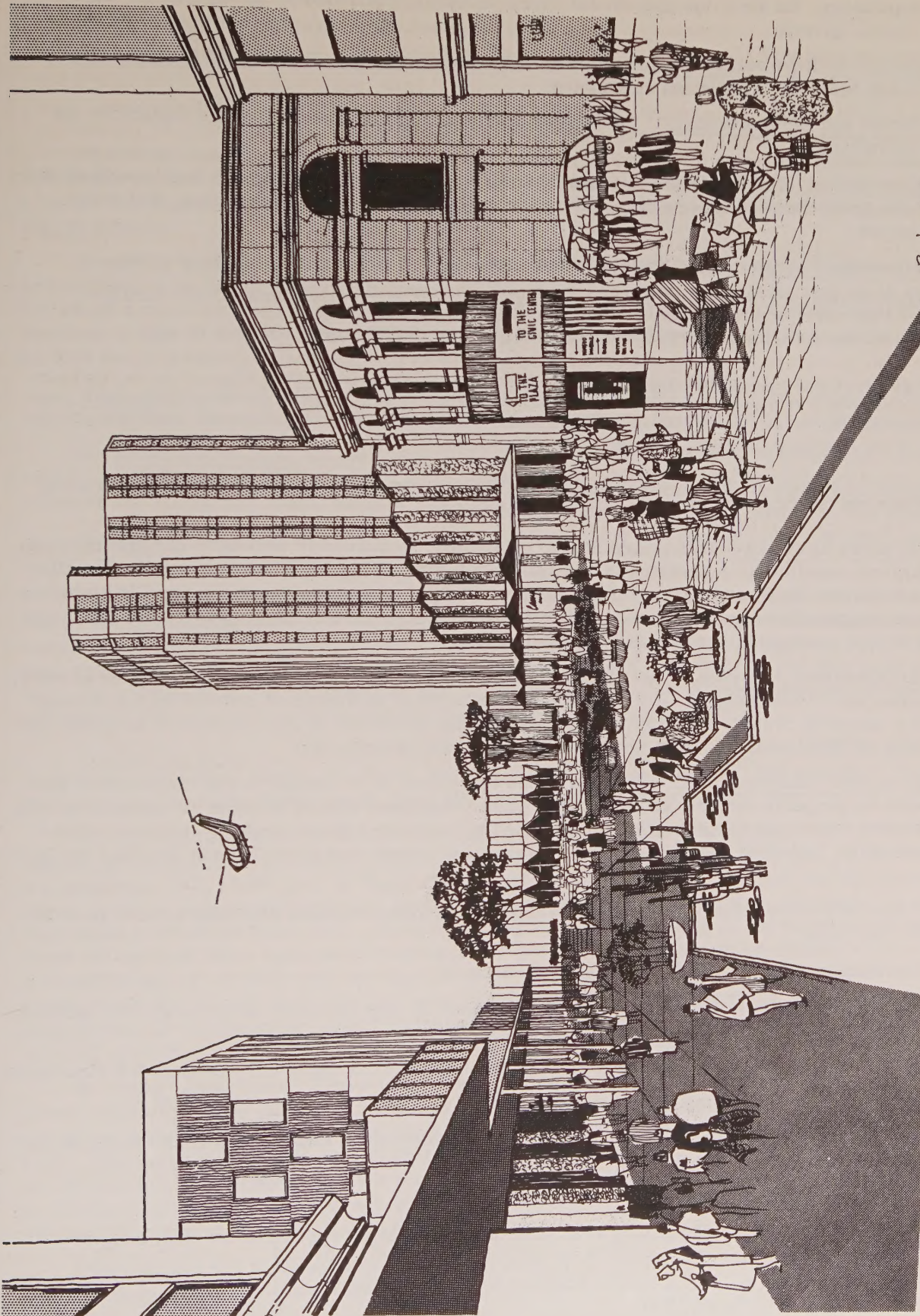
Of the 37 cities reporting, 30 indicated the source of its formal mall proposal. Eleven were initiated by municipal planning agencies, two by city consultants, seven by retail groups, nine by formal private downtown organizations, and one by an informal group. Four of the seven proposals made by retail groups resulted in temporary malls for retail promotion only, and indications are that no follow-up is planned.

The broad planning stages reported by these cities are generally the following: defining the problem, detailed downtown studies, and plans for the future.

**Defining the Problem.** Initially this involves taking stock of the characteristics of the individual city's downtown area, determining what is there now and possibilities for the future. To be trustworthy, such a study should include these factors:<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> This list is based on *Commercial Development in Richmond, Its Problems and Prospects* (Richmond, California: City Planning Commission, 1958), p. 4.





Source: Victor Gruen Associates and Larry Smith & Company. *Kalamazoo, 1980* (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Downtown Planning Committee, Inc., 1958), p. 27.

Figure 1 — Pedestrian Mall in Kalamazoo, Michigan, Final Stage



1. Population. Its size, income, social characteristics, distribution throughout the market area, and rate of growth.
  2. Quality of Merchandising. Individually and collectively, the ability of CBD stores to provide goods and services to satisfied customers.
  3. Stores and Other Buildings. Their appearance, structural flexibility, and suitability for business operations.
  4. Circulation. The location of competing and complementary or "helpful" businesses or districts and the character and quality of facilities for circulation by pedestrians, cars, and mass transit vehicles.
  5. Economic Forces. Wage scales, interest rates, ease of financing, and land costs.
  6. Merchandising Changes. Effects of changes such as supermarkets and self-service.
- On the basis of such a survey, the Richmond Planning Commission had this to say:

If we choose to organize, utilize and apply the highest levels of knowledge at our disposal we can find ourselves 10 years from now with strong neighborhood and community shopping centers for daily needs and a genuine business district. Or we can do nothing and end up with a little bit here and there and not much of anything anywhere. This, it must be realized, is *not* an oversimplification.

Detailed Downtown Studies. Based upon these findings, analyses should be made of planning, architectural and economic aspects of downtown renewal.<sup>13</sup>

1. Planning Analyses — This is needed to "determine the economic necessity for preservation and the physical possibility of redesign in relation to other city planning elements, such as traffic, transit, and adjacent land used." It involves determination of demand for space in the CBD, studies of consumer action, allocation of space in the redesigned district, study of the market for land, and estimates of land needed for parking and other purposes.

2. Architectural Analyses. This should "determine the possibility of achieving physical unity, attractiveness and pleasantness." It involves the architectural problems of converting a shopping district to a shopping center, the elimination of eye sores, provision of amenities such as landscaping and other architectural features, and analyses of structural function.

3. Economic Analyses. This should be based on studies of municipal costs, cooperative cost of merchants or property owners, and individual costs. Analyses should be made of changes in real estate valuation within the center, effect on surrounding property buyers, and the economic effect on the community, including changes in the tax base, employment and payrolls, and shopper convenience.

Plan for the Future. The objectives of such planning should include attention to both general and specific features.

1. Unification of the district into a definite entity.
2. Improvement of site layout through establishment of new relations between stores, parking, pedestrians, motorists, and truck and other services.
3. Elimination of blight from nonconforming and incompatible uses and deteriorated structures.
4. Provision of new amenities.
5. Achievement of cohesion of management operation, through cooperation of the multiple interests acting jointly.
6. Diversion of unnecessary traffic.
7. Provision for sufficient parking at a reasonable cost close enough to the mall area to encourage use by shoppers.

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<sup>13</sup> Nelson and Aschman, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-21.



8. Improvement of mass transit.

9. Physical improvement of the downtown area.

See Figures 2 and 3 for a plan to change land-use patterns in Muskegon, Michigan.

### Mall Experience

Municipal experience with pedestrian mall proposals may be grouped into three general classifications: (1) those proposed but not carried out, (2) those subject to trial, (3) and those erected on a permanent basis. A fourth category would be downtown programs using mall concepts without closing off streets.

Proposed Malls. *Architectural Forum* in its February, 1959, issue, says that about 100 cities are actively considering pedestrian malls. While there have been no tangible results in most cities for which a mall has been proposed, the experience gained during planning is important. Thus, other sections of this report are able to utilize the experience gained from mall proposals in such cities as Richmond, Fresno, Milwaukee, and numerous others.

Trial Malls. Trial malls, as indicated earlier, fall into two categories: retail promotions and serious studies. However, even the serious studies required cooperation of downtown retail interests.

1. Retail Promotion. Of the dozen or so trial malls, a majority have been "gimmicks" to spur sales. None of these trials has resulted in steps toward permanent malls, although some cities have repeated the temporary mall. Replies from two such cities, Waukegan and Flint, were as follows:

Waukegan. "Strictly a business enterprise by the local merchants and [consisted] of little more than carnival atmosphere and was held three days only."

Flint. "These experiments consisted merely of closing the main business section to vehicular traffic and permitting use of the main streets by pedestrians, for display of merchandise, entertainment attractions, etc. While considered successful by the downtown merchants as a retailing promotion, sentiments concerning the continuance of such activities or establishment of a permanent mall still are widely varied. I believe I am safe in estimating that any permanent program will not be initiated in Flint for at least the next two years, and probably not at all."

2. Serious Studies. Attempts have been made in several cities — Springfield, Oregon, Oxnard, California, and Grand Haven, Michigan, especially — to appraise shopper and merchant attitudes toward trial malls while they were in progress or shortly afterwards.

Springfield results were obtained through a post card survey, questionnaires submitted to merchants, attendance figures, and a traffic analysis. Of the merchants on the mall, 78 per cent thought it a success. Only 36 per cent of those off the mall thought this way. Seventy-seven per cent of the shoppers were in favor of the mall. However, the merchants' thinking on a permanent mall differed from their view of the trial mall. Forty-eight per cent of merchants on the mall, and 90 per cent of those off the mall were opposed to making it permanent. Oxnard surveyed shopper opinion by means of questionnaires. Of 623 respondents, 330 were in favor, 246 opposed, and 47 indifferent. Grand Haven found that 63 per cent of the persons questioned liked the experiment, and 83 per cent of the businessmen in the downtown area felt that planning should be started for a permanent mall. However, off-mall merchant opinion was split, with 47 per cent flatly opposed.

3. Trial Limitations. Those who have conducted trial malls recognize the limitations of temporary malls for study purposes. These malls were branded "special" by advertising, entertainment and other temporary features. This "special" quality might well evaporate with time in a temporary mall. The temporary mall cannot compare with the amenities of a permanent mall. Potted trees and shrubs are not the same as ones planted permanently; sawhorse barriers are not the same as architecturally distinctive features; decorated store fronts are not as pleasing as renovated stores with architectural unity.

Other points are mentioned in a response from Rock Island, Illinois, to the question, "Did your experiment disclose limitations which should be weighed before a mall is constructed?"





Source: Muskegon Planning Commission. *Central Business District Redevelopment Plan* (Muskegon, Michigan: The Commission, 1957), follows p. 10.

Figure 2—CBD Land Use, Muskegon, Michigan, 1957

The chief limitation we foresee is that of hurry. It seems probable that something above and beyond a few trees and no cars will be necessary to make the downtown mall a long-term success. A critical area here in the midwest is the violent extremes of weather experienced. Climate control, or something very close to it may be necessary. . . . A short-term expedient might ruin chances of getting a really functional improvement.

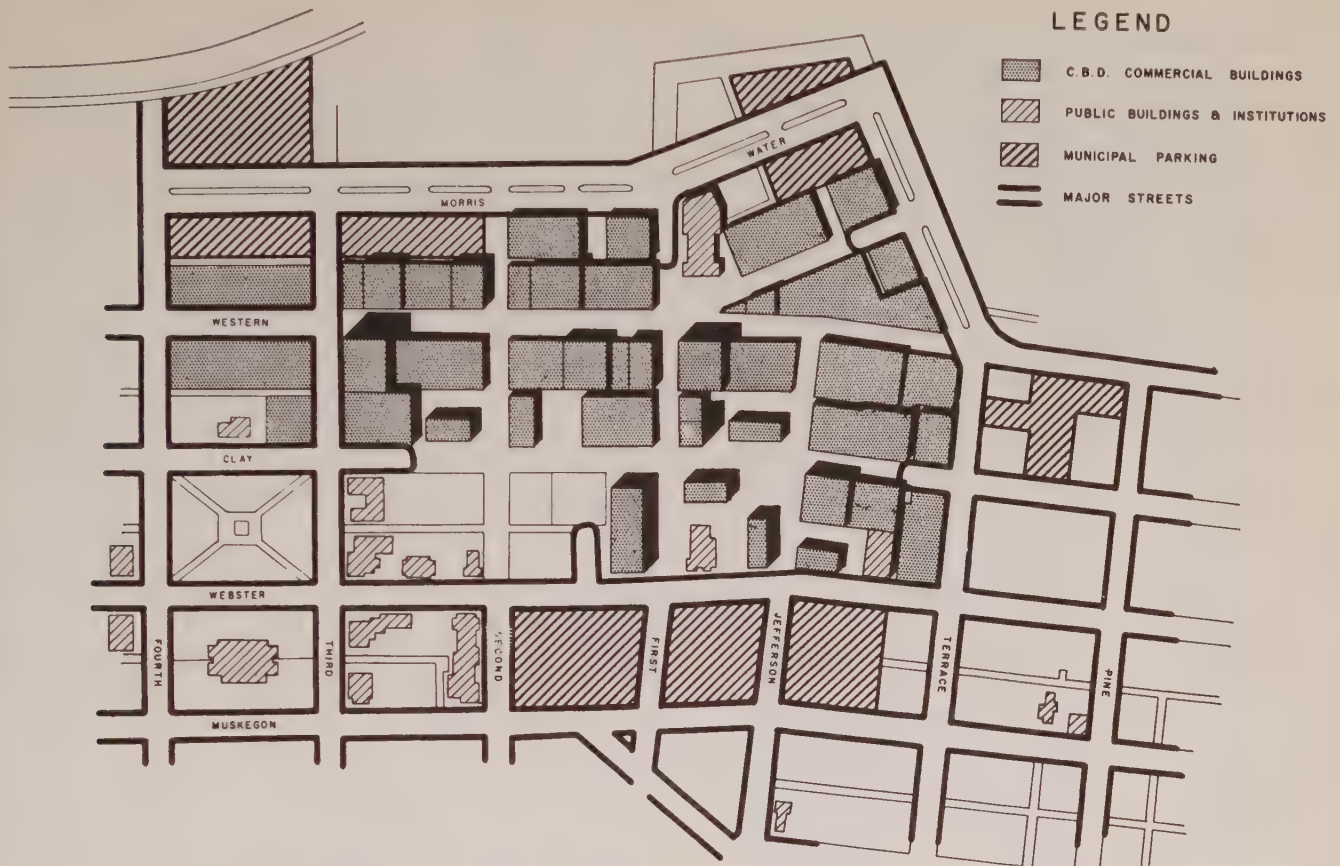
**4. Is A Trial Worth While?** This reaction raises the question of whether an experiment is worth while. It is possible that the use of temporary malls for purely promotional purposes has caused some reaction against trial malls. Here are some comments, generally opposed, from cities on the value of experimentation.

Raleigh, North Carolina. I believe that a temporary experiment should not be made. The idea should be approached with sufficient proof of success and that it would be considered a permanent change.

Richmond, California. Richmond has not and will not experiment with a mall. The proposal is a complete and permanent one. The consultant who prepared the plan for renewing downtown puts it this way: "What is needed is a complete change in scale, from that of the automobile to that of the shopper. To experiment with a mall by putting in potted plants, canned music, and the like might create a fiesta atmosphere and be a valid promotional gimmick, but it would not be a valid approach to Richmond's downtown problems. Temporarily removing on-street parking through closing off the main business street and not providing at least as much off-street parking to replace it would aggravate the parking problem, not aid in the solution. What is needed for shopper convenience is to replace the asphalt with surface materials designed for foot traffic comfort; to provide permanent facilities right on the mall that will encourage leisurely shopping and allow relaxation of pedestrians while downtown. In light of active competition from nearby planned shopping centers, Downtown Richmond has not time for experiments of this nature. . . ."

Grand Haven, Michigan. In this as in any case, I feel that the extent of city participation can be justified only on the basis of research, the object of the research being to determine what extent the mall serves the public interest, and this must be carefully distinguished from serving the interests of any particular merchants.





Source: Muskegon Planning Commission. *Central Business District Redevelopment Plan* (Muskegon, Michigan: The Commission, 1957), follows p. 43.

Figure 3 — Future Land-Use Plan, Muskegon, Michigan

Springfield, Oregon. We do not plan another temporary mall for fear that such a program would be considered as an annual promotion and thus destroy any chance of a permanent mall in Springfield.

5. Value of Trial. Despite these objections, Des Moines intends to repeat, and even expand the trial mall it held in October, 1958. Two major streets will be affected, whereas only one was involved in the last trial. Des Moines is one of the cities in which the Retail Merchants Bureau developed plans for the mall. Other cities have decided to experiment for the first time. Toledo, for example, launched a 45-day experiment early in August, 1959. This is probably the longest trial period thus far undertaken. Four downtown blocks were closed off. In many cities, there is felt to be a need for more information, particularly about traffic and parking.

a. Traffic. It is possible that some effects of pedestrian malls could not be determined without a trial mall. For example, most cities which had trial malls experienced little difficulty in diverting traffic from downtown streets for the trial period. But in a few cities real problems developed. Boston's situation is explained in some detail below in the section "Why Are Malls Opposed?" However, another example is furnished by Oberlin, Ohio:

A great number of Oberlin residents objected to the abrupt interruption of vehicular traffic. This was anticipated, but the objections were more numerous and strenuous than we in our most pessimistic views had expected. The matter of vehicular circulation in Oberlin proved to be particularly objectionable because of the inability, due to local street peculiarities, to adequately detour State Route 58 traffic.



b. Parking. The need to find close-in parking was stressed by several cities. Boulder, Colorado, and Grants Pass, Oregon, although they have not developed plans for malls, have been concerned with this problem:

Boulder. By making two downtown streets one-way, and instituting 45-degree parking, the city was able to add 58 parking spaces in the heart of the shopping district at a cost of \$1,200, compared with from \$2,000 to \$3,000 to develop each off-street parking space. The 58 spaces make 2,688 one-hour spaces available each week. This first phase of downtown improvement has received overwhelming support and has really given the downtown merchants a completely new outlook on improvements for the downtown area.

Grants Pass. Our downtown planning program has not developed to a point where we are in a position to make recommendations concerning the establishment of a downtown pedestrian mall. It does appear, however, that if any significant progress is to be made in downtown off-street parking the development of malls for pedestrian use will result. This result appears probable because of the small size of downtown blocks and the tremendous amount of downtown property which is now used for streets. Some of these streets will evidently have to be abandoned for traffic purposes in order to provide large enough areas to provide suitable off-street parking spaces.

Oberlin found the importance of close-in parking facilities in its trial. It didn't have enough:

The greatest objection on the part of the general public and the merchants was the lack of suitable and convenient off-street parking facilities to accommodate the shoppers and visitors to the experiment. An attempt was made by the city to overcome this by improving an area of land some 700 to 800 feet from the center of downtown Oberlin. It was discovered, however, that people were unwilling to leave their cars in these parking areas and walk that distance. This seems to indicate that peripheral off-street parking in Oberlin is not practical and that any off-street parking in the future whether it be in conjunction with a pedestrian mall or not, be located... within a very short walking distance of Oberlin's commercial shops.

See Figure 4 for a small city's plan to create close-in parking facilities.

Permanent Malls. Kalamazoo, Michigan, is the only United States city which has constructed a permanent mall by closing downtown streets. For this reason and because of the demonstrated limitations of temporary trial malls, information supplied by Kalamazoo will be described in some detail.

In the early stages, Kalamazoo started out much like any other community — it heard about a proposed mall in another city.

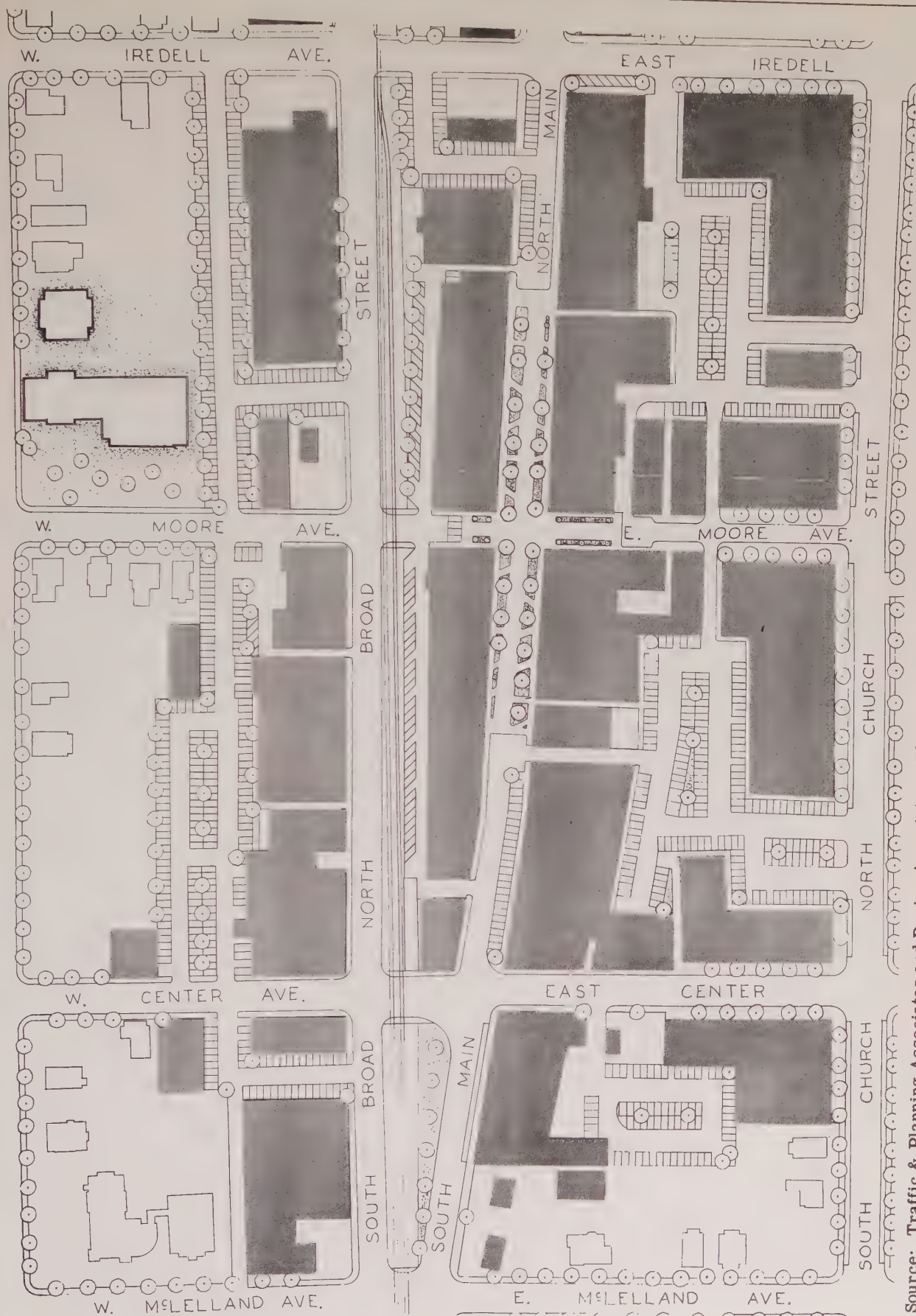
Kalamazoo's interest stemmed from publicity given the Gruen report on Fort Worth, Texas. Charles B. Ford, then city planner, raised the subject with persons who were favorable to the idea of investigating the possibility of a plan for the CBD.

Two planning firms were asked to discuss the proposals for such a study with city officials and the businessmen. Both firms emphasized that the businesses located in the CBD had to support the undertaking from an enlightened self-interest viewpoint, if a planning study were to be undertaken and the proposals adopted. A Downtown Kalamazoo Planning Committee was organized. This committee raised funds for a study of the CBD and engaged one of the firms, Victor Gruen Associates, to perform the study. The Gruen report pointed out that Kalamazoo shares "the South Michigan trade area with Battle Creek and Grand Rapids." It also noted, "As the total Kalamazoo urban complex has grown, opportunities for suburban retailing have increased rapidly."

Kalamazoo's plan calls for a three-stage transition in a CBD of 45 square blocks from scattered to concentrated land use; a CBD in which the only vehicular traffic, except service vehicles, would be public transit buses and cars entering or leaving parking facilities. Retail stores would be grouped in one section of the CBD, civic and cultural activities in a second, and hospital and research activities in a third. In all, approximately 20 square blocks would be utilized for parking, with no parking lot more than a five-minute walk from the retail area.

But this is long range. At present Kalamazoo is working on only a part of the first stage. Two blocks of Burdick Street, in the center of the present retail area, have been torn up, and asphalt replaced with material better suited to pedestrian use. Some 240 new off-street parking spaces





Source: Traffic & Planning Associates and Design Associates. *The Mooresville Plan* (Mooresville, North Carolina: Mooresville Board of Commissioners, 1957).

Figure 4 — Final Plan for Business District, Mooresville, North Carolina



will be supplied, more than double the 100 curb spaces to be lost on mall streets and adjacent streets where parking will be banned to permit easier flow of traffic diverted from Burdick Street.

City Manager C. H. Elliott said, "We regard Burdick Street Mall as an experiment in solving the problems we are facing in our central business district. If this step proves successful, other recommendations of the Gruen Plan will probably be implemented as funds become available."

For this experiment the city and merchants between them have put up a \$60,000 stake. This will be discussed later in dealing with financing mall planning and construction.

Mall Variations. The same concepts that led to mall proposals have been at work elsewhere. Three variations will be discussed here.

1. Hollywood, Florida. A downtown beautification project, now completed, was initiated by a group of property owners in the CBD. However, it was undertaken with the support and assistance of the city council. Total cost was about \$60,000. It included replacement of sidewalks on both sides of a two and one-quarter block section of the main business street. Ninety planter bins were placed along the sidewalks. Thirty benches were set out, and the state resurfaced the street. The city installed a 24-inch median strip. It is proposed that this same theme be extended in the future to include two other parallel business streets, as well as extended sections of the main street. Many property owners have remodeled and repainted their store buildings since completion of the project. Comment from merchants, tourists, and residents has been favorable.

2. Rochester, New York. The Rochester downtown renewal program, privately financed for the most part with some city participation, has been described as one coming very close to a suburban shopping center downtown. Physically it involves a 30-store shopping area, an 18-story office building-restaurant-hotel, and a bus terminal, all connected by an interior pedestrian way. The city will construct a 2,000 car underground garage. Known as Midtown Plaza, it is due to be completed by October, 1962. Extensive street construction will be completed about the same time. Total cost: \$15,000,000.

3. Philadelphia. The Penn Center Concourse is a pedestrian way beneath five city blocks in downtown Philadelphia. It handles more than 80,000 pedestrians a day, many of whom arrive by mass transit. Part of the concourse area and a skating rink are open to the sky above. Specialty stores, drug and similar stores, and restaurants face the concourse.

### Why are Malls Opposed?

The answers to this question vary from city to city. The major reasons given by the cities questioned were:

1. Cost.
2. Lack of civic leadership.
3. Opposition of influential merchants.
4. Opposition from off-mall merchants and merchants depending on quick-stop customers.
5. Absentee ownership of buildings.
6. Public indifference or skepticism.
7. Opposition of automobile clubs, trucking firms, and fire and safety executives.
8. Opposition of owners of property needed for renewal project.
9. Property owners who feel they cannot afford special assessments.
10. Opposition from people opposed to spending municipal funds for the benefit of mall merchants.

Case Histories. Replies given by cities asked about oppositions are summarized:

1. Windsor, Ontario. Downtown Merchants Association, which developed original plans for mall, withdrew support after city departments ascertained cost and difficulties that might be encountered. Although the matter is dormant, the city planning commission has undertaken a CBD study during which the pedestrian mall "will be thoroughly investigated as a possible measure of improvement."



2. Milwaukee. The Downtown Association moved to set up a five-day experimental mall based upon a report of the city planning division. Opposition came from within and without city government. "The city engineer and the American Automobile Association were against any closing of streets to the motor vehicle — temporary or permanent! The director of the Safety Commission was worried about people walking in the streets after long years of educating the public to cross streets only at the safety zone or cross walks. The fire chief was concerned about fire equipment answering emergencies on the avenue, even though the association's consultants assured that the installation would allow for the passage of emergency vehicles. The traffic engineer was concerned about rerouting the existing traffic and the cost of \$10,000 (approximately) needed for traffic signs and signal lights." The proposal died in city council committee.

3. Fort Worth. One of the early and more dramatic plans, Fort Worth's mall proposals have resulted in little of a concrete nature, although a trial mall was erected by merchants. According to *Architectural Forum*<sup>14</sup> little has happened and voter rejection of civic improvements and an auditorium put up for referendum "does not seem to bode well." The most important reasons for failure, the magazine says, were:

1. Lack of preparation of the citizens to receive the plan.
2. Lack of any long standing cohesive committee of civic leaders to push it.
3. Failure to take into account the social, political, and economic factors needed to implement the plan.

A Committee for Greater Fort Worth has been set up since then, not for the purpose of promoting the plan, but rather for the creation of the civic climate and confidence in leadership for achieving the basic features of the plan.

4. Boston. Boston's plans for closing some central business district streets had a "stormy career." Real estate interests made the original proposal to close off street traffic on two or three short cross streets. The idea was to capitalize on the variety of high-class specialty shops in the district. As an experiment, benches and shrubbery were placed on the streets at curbstones. Trucks were permitted to enter the streets between 9:00 and 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 and 5:00 p.m. for delivery and pickup. Merchants agreed to reface their store fronts so that architectural appearances would be unified, if the experiment proved successful. Other steps were taken by the city so that a distinctive shopping center would result.

The experiment seemed successful, based on reports of merchants, and the city was hopeful that this would stop the decline in realty values in the area. The merchants requested tax concessions with the promise that any tax savings would be devoted to property improvements after which new true values would be established.

Some objections arose on the part of trucking interests. But the death blow was struck by the president of Boston's largest department store with the assent of the second and third largest stores nearby. They opposed because it made their stores less accessible and because diversion of traffic caused considerable congestion at an important intersection. They argued that their taxable property value far exceeded that of the area in which this development was taking place. While it was conceded the project had merit, it was dropped after four months because of the controversy.

5. Springfield, Oregon. "While shopper's Paradise was undoubtedly a success in terms of encouraging other communities all over the country to conduct similar experiments, we must admit to failure in gaining support for a permanent mall development. The question... has arisen from time to time, but for the most part it has not excited the interest or imagination of most of our downtown merchants and property owners.

"Proposals for a permanent mall have been suggested generally by two or three of the more active members of the Chamber of Commerce and by members of the city planning commission. Opposition has been expressed from several of the downtown property owners who, while impressed with the results of the experiment, simply have not recognized the need for drastic rearrangement of the downtown area. Primarily, opposition stems from the fact that much of our downtown property is in absentee ownership and is currently returning a reasonable sum of money to the owners.

<sup>14</sup> Jeanne R. Lowe, "What's Happened in Fort Worth?" *Architectural Forum*, May, 1959.



I fear that the permanent mall will be acceptable to this group only when downtown is in desperate trouble and this condition is reflected by lower rentals and empty stores."

6. Fresno, California. Criticism of the concept of a mall has been primarily in relation to the methods of serving buildings and a method for bring cars very close to buildings for purposes of dropping off or picking up a passenger — perhaps an invalid. The consultants have accordingly made further studies and revisions and have come up with a solution for the servicing problem which involves widening and improving existing alleys. They have also introduced a series of short cul-de-sacs penetrating into the super block. These, it is felt, will answer the problem of dropping off or picking up persons, as well as provide space for taxi stands. Another detail has been the problem of circulating emergency vehicles in the mall. The consultants now propose retaining a certain minimum width within the mall system along which emergency fire, police and ambulance vehicles could circulate.

7. Atlanta. "There were several proposals advanced as early as five years ago; however, they have been abandoned because of a lack of response on the part of merchants, parking lot operators, and similar interests. There were, also, some very difficult and unusual physical situations which could not be easily solved by the installation of pedestrian malls."

8. Royal Oak, Michigan. Seventy-two privately owned properties are needed for redevelopment as parking facilities. Among these are homes and combination home-rental properties. It is expected that certain of these owners would object to any public improvement which would necessitate acquisition of their properties.

Opposition has been expressed to the cost of the program, since \$2,803,000 would be especially assessed against privately owned properties within the CBD redevelopment area. Some of these owners feel their share of the total project cost is more than their property is worth at the present time and that therefore it would not be economically possible for them to bear such an assessment.

Opposition has been voiced regarding the city's \$141,000 share of the cost, which will come from motor vehicle gas and weight tax payments from the state. The opposition states that public funds would be used to finance a portion of the cost made necessary by CBD Redevelopment; that public funds would be used to benefit only a selected few individuals.

Some opposition has questioned the necessity of CBD redevelopment, arguing that where additional off-street parking might be necessary, it is not necessary to create a shopping mall in order to revitalize business in the CBD. Others have argued that no portion of the program is necessary, that business will increase or decrease solely in relation to the economy of this area and in proportion to the efforts made by merchants at good merchandising and other self-improvement practices.

### Results of Downtown Planning

Have there been results from downtown planning programs? Many large cities have taken great strides toward physical rebuilding of their downtown districts. Pittsburgh is the classic example. Other cities, such as Kalamazoo and Rochester, are in what might be called early stages of rebuilding. But most plans are still on paper. However, there have been real, if less tangible, results of downtown planning. Springfield, Oregon, reports:

The best aspect of the mall was the reaction of our citizens to it. We also found that many things heretofore felt impossible could be easily accomplished. Complete rerouting of traffic, for example, was accomplished with a reduction in the normal frequency of minor accidents. Our narrow streets worked amazingly well as diagonal parking lots. The by-pass of the downtown area was universally beneficial even though previous proposals of a similar nature had met with stiff opposition from [the] merchant community. . . . Although no permanent aspect of the "Shopper's Paradise" experiment has been put into effect, the experiment did change the thinking of planners as to long-range programs for downtown Springfield. For example, a downtown by-pass project has been adopted on a long-range basis by the Planning Commission. Our off-street parking program has been changed somewhat because of the experiment. Plans for the future commercial development of Springfield now take into consideration the possibility of a permanent mall in our business district.

Grand Haven, Michigan, stated that the new and well-marked signs indicating parking areas have been retained and are effective in directing traffic.



Alexandria, Virginia, reported that the mall concept has encouraged greater unity in the downtown business community and developed additional support for city planning.

Further, a number of cities, including Baltimore, Royal Oak and Richmond, to mention a few, have included downtown redevelopment in their official redevelopment programs and have initiated steps to carry out the plans in various stages.

### Mall Development and Administration

Legal Problems. A basic question on malls is the legality of closing streets for pedestrian use. The answer, of course, depends on state law regarding the closing of streets and what constitutes the closing of streets.

Of all the trial malls, only Grand Haven's came anywhere near court action. The original one-week mall period was extended, and there was some sentiment in favor of continuing it all summer. Thirteen merchants, however, who felt their business suffered and let it be known that they would seek a court injunction. The situation was eased when it was agreed to end the trial after three weeks, and thus the point was not subjected to a court ruling. But the Grand Haven situation underscores the need for a study of the likelihood of legal action by merchants, even if the individual merchant supported the mall proposal before it was put into effect. The major problems of planning and organization for the mall in Grand Haven are described in further detail in Appendix B.

Municipal and private liability for accidents in mall areas should be determined since proposed malls have called for decorations and fixtures not commonly associated with street traffic. Normally the abutting land owner is responsible for the condition of the sidewalk in front of a store, but where would his liability end if a mall is created?

Charter limitations may have to be overcome. For example, Royal Oak plans to finance redevelopment of its CBD through special assessment bonds, with the maximum term of assessment being 20 years. Because the city charter allowed only a maximum of 10 years it was necessary to seek an amendment to the charter to make the extended financing period possible. At the same time, it was necessary to obtain voter approval to make it possible for the city to use money from the bond sale to retire existing revenue bonds which had been used to build downtown parking lots several years ago. Both charter amendments were approved by the voters in February, 1959, by a three-to-one majority.

Further, state legislative action was necessary to clear the way to use assessment bond income for retirement of the old bond issue. This also was obtained in 1959 by passage of a law by the state legislature. In order to clear all possible legal obstacles, the Royal Oak timetable includes these steps:

A taxpayer's suit of the entire proceeding would need to be taken in our circuit court in order to test the validity of a number of these points, including the use of special assessment monies to retire revenue bonds, so as to make these particular special assessment bonds saleable. An appeal would need to be taken from the circuit court's findings to the Michigan Supreme Court regardless of the decision of the lower court...<sup>15</sup>

Access. Provision must be made for access by delivery trucks and emergency trucks and emergency vehicles. Maximum use should be made of rear access to stores by pickup and delivery trucks. It may be necessary to permit trucks to use the streets otherwise barred to traffic. Some cities have already confined truck deliveries to off-peak hours to reduce congestion. In Boston's short-lived mall area, two one-hour periods, in morning and afternoon, were set up for entry by trucks. Trucking firms were among the opponents of the mall, probably because it called for tighter schedules on their part.

Analysis of pickup and delivery needs of the CBD should be made. In some cases it might well be that common carriers could offer a tighter delivery schedule and more flexibility in type and size of trucks than do manufacturers who deliver their own products.

The municipality might be faced with scheduling problems of its own where city trucks pick up

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<sup>15</sup> See Appendix C for details of special assessment formula in Royal Oak.



refuse from stores and from litter baskets in the mall area. Normally this type of pickup is best done at night. Closing off the mall area also should be considered in light of probable effect on mass transit franchises and the access rights of electrical, gas, and telephone companies.

The mall area should always permit access by police, fire, and other emergency vehicles. Police and fire chiefs and other city department heads should be consulted at this stage. Of course, none of the fixtures in a mall area should block off fire hydrants, extinguisher connections, telephone call boxes, and similar emergency facilities.

Selection of Mall Facilities. Trees, shrubs, and benches are typical park amenities proposed in most mall plans. Park department experience could well indicate which types of these items will stand up best in their community and which should not be used because they are particularly vulnerable to vandalism and weather extremes. This is a case where shopping center experience also would be helpful.<sup>18</sup>

Maintenance Responsibility. Most plans call for utilization of the mall's open areas for such events as flower and art shows which necessarily, require administrative machinery to take care of scheduling, erection, maintenance, and policing. Maintenance of the mall would most likely seem to fall within the jurisdiction of the street or parks department. The parks department, or a closely related recreation department, normally is responsible for reserving ball fields, picnic pavillions, and similar facilities, and thus may be able to assume related scheduling duties involving the mall.

Code Enforcement. Since the element of obsolescent buildings is a major element of CBD deterioration, effective enforcement of sound building, zoning, housing, and similar municipal codes is needed to prevent further blight and to preserve any gains made through new construction or renovation in the downtown area. Where the encroachment of run-down, blighted residential buildings is a contributor to downtown deterioration, elimination of substandard buildings can be accelerated through code enforcement, perhaps in conjunction with an urban renewal program in the fringe areas.

### Financing

Early Stages. A mall program should stem from a master plan for city development. A master plan should be the *starting point* for development in every part of the city, not just the downtown area.

But there are indications that merchants and businessmen in the downtown area have taken the initiative on many occasions, and use consultants, colleges, and even permanent organizations such as the Baltimore Planning Council to speed planning for the downtown area. Such a group, however, rarely operates without consulting city officials to receive assurance that the city will cooperate.

In some cases, cities and private agencies have cooperated extensively in the preparation of plans for downtown as in Covina, California.

Specific Projects. How much should the city spend downtown for capital improvements? A great many factors are involved in answering this question. Certainly, long-range capital budgeting is necessary. Capital budgeting requires a good idea of demands to be made in the period of time covered. Thus, the downtown plan must be well drawn, stages determined and priorities established before a financial program can be developed. Unless the downtown project is completely downtown generated and financed, the city must determine the weight it will give to downtown investment as opposed to other demands in terms of the city's entire fiscal sources.

Who Pays for What? Here are some of the financial arrangements worked out to finance downtown revitalization as described by reporting cities:

1. Kalamazoo. The city departed from its standard special assessment practices to deal with mall problems.

We had no directly applicable policy regarding sharing of construction costs when it was decided to proceed with the first stage of implementing the plan. Negotiations were held between members of the city administration

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<sup>18</sup> J. C. Nichols, *Mistakes We Have Made in Developing Shopping Centers*, (Washington, D.C.: Urban Land Institute, 1945). This report, among other suggestions, warns against complicated fixtures, those which present unusual maintenance problems, and those which do not help business.



and representatives of downtown merchants to arrive at an equitable basis of financing which could be recommended to the city commission. . . . We recognized that the city had a definite interest in preventing deterioration of the CBD — an estimated 16 per cent of its personal and real property taxes come from this area — but the city took the position that the merchants and property owners in the area also had a responsibility to protect property values. It was finally recommended that the city assume 50 per cent of the cost of construction of a mall . . . the other 50 per cent will be assessed against abutting property on the basis of land value. This is a departure from our normal procedures of front-footage assessment for such improvements as residential streets, curbs and gutters, sanitary sewers, etc. Thus, assessments were calculated against abutting property on the basis of land values, and not on a front-footage basis. Involved were 1,670 linear feet abutting the mall, 530 on the north block and 1,140 on the south block. If the assessment roll as prepared is confirmed, the north block will pay 11.8 per cent while the south block will pay 88.2 per cent.

Total land value involved in the mall area is \$6,366,370. The value of each parcel was assessed to establish its respective portion of the total. This percentage was then applied to the \$30,000. Individual assessments will range from \$122.71 to a high of \$3,423.93.

2. Royal Oak. CBD revitalization is privately financed with special assessments within the district to finance a \$2.8 million bond issue. Its formula depends in part on property values and in part on the "anticipated location value on completion of redevelopment."

The city will allocate \$141,404 as its share, representing one-half of the estimated cost of land acquisition and construction work in the widening of certain existing streets which will serve as peripheral traffic routes around the CBD. This sum also represents one-half of the construction cost of the new access road between two streets within the CBD. In addition, the city would be expected to provide any additional items of equipment necessary for proper traffic control, signs, pavement markings, etc. No estimate has as yet been made of these costs.<sup>17</sup>

It is generally understood that the downtown businessmen will play an important part in financing downtown improvements. The Chamber of Commerce raised funds and hired professional assistance in formulating the proposed CBD redevelopment plan. It expected the city's administrative staff to study, analyze and make estimates of costs upon implementation of the plan. The city was expected to take the necessary action to secure enabling legislation which would make possible the financing of these improvements. The Chamber of Commerce has understood that it would be up to its members to advertise and promote the shopping center and the redevelopment program so as to interest new businesses in locating stores in the CBD.

3. Rochester, New York. A definite policy has been worked out to govern municipal participation in downtown projects.

The City of Rochester is vitally interested in the improvement of its downtown area. In order to bring this about the city administration is always willing to consider participation in desirable projects calculated to bring about such improvement. Its participation is, however, limited to normal and proper municipal functions such as the construction or relocation of streets, sewers and water mains, the construction of public parking facilities and other similar services.

The criteria on which action is based is the amount of new taxable property which would be produced by resulting private investment or the degree to which existing taxable values would be maintained or increased.

This policy was fixed by the Rochester City Council after lengthy discussions, amongst its members and with the City Planning Commission, on different specific projects tended to similar conclusions.<sup>18</sup>

4. Hollywood, Florida. The city's participation is slightly less than half, not including state resurfacing of the street.

Of the total cost (\$60,561) of the project, the city's share amounted to \$27,239, which included the cost of the curbs and gutters, median strip, relocation of meter boxes and manhole covers, underground wiring, and a sprinkler system for planter bins. The property owners were assessed the cost of the sidewalks, \$18,173, and the cost of the shrubbery, plants, and street benches, \$15,149, for a total of \$33,322.

5. Trial Mall Cities. Springfield, Oregon, Grand Haven, Michigan, Modesto, California, and Des Moines, Iowa, reported they had some outlays as a result of trial malls. The city expenditures were not always converted to dollar costs, since services of city personnel often were used.

<sup>17</sup> Both the Kalamazoo and Royal Oak special assessment formulas are given in greater detail in Appendix C.

<sup>18</sup> Quoted from a letter to ICMA by Mayor Peter Barry of Rochester.



Grand Haven estimates that its participation was about 15 per cent of the total cost. Springfield estimated its costs at \$3,500, not including loss of \$800 from parking meters in the mall area or personnel costs involved in planning and setting up the mall. Modesto indicated that it had no out-of-pocket expense, although city equipment and personnel were used. Des Moines estimated its cost of \$1,300, mostly for labor. Its second trial mall in October will cost less because fixtures were saved and the Retail Bureau has agreed to reimburse the city for other costs. Significantly, none of the four cities said that it had arrived at "ground rules" to cover city participation in a permanent mall on the basis of their experiments.

Tax Concessions. Real estate men, in some cases, have called for tax concessions to spur downtown improvement. In light of current municipal revenue pressures, however, such concessions are unlikely without some assurance of long-term benefits to the city as a whole.

Milwaukee's Marine Plaza project illustrates the problem involved in tax concessions.<sup>19</sup> A privately financed commercial project, it involves \$15 million to be spent for renewal of one of the run-down areas of the city. The developers, a Milwaukee bank, seeks an "assessment freeze" permitted by a Wisconsin law designed to encourage private redevelopment. If granted, the "freeze" would mean that the property would be assessed at its present value for a specified period. Another large bank is opposed, and the matter is before the city council. The opposing bank has called it a "tax subsidy . . . awarded to one business enterprise over its competitors." A previous attempt to use the enabling act for a housing project never reached a council vote because of opposition.

Urban Renewal. The gray belt of blighted industrial and residential properties surrounding many CBD's offers an opportunity for a multiple-purpose urban renewal program. Despite the emphasis of the Urban Renewal Administration on residential housing, "Title One redevelopments are not limited to housing. Of the 347 Title One projects in the country for which the character of the development has been determined, only 189 will be exclusively or predominantly residential."<sup>20</sup>

Under the redevelopment laws of several states, municipal agencies may operate without federal assistance to encourage private redevelopment, and many cities are utilizing these powers.

Prospects for federally assisted programs for downtown are not too good, at present, because of insufficient appropriations by Congress. Although it is by no means universal, many cities feel they can't afford to wait until sufficient funds became available.

However, on a long-range basis, federal urban renewal can be helpful. While private interests spur downtown revitalization, work could be started on eliminating the contributory blight of nearby slums. This has been done in some European cities which rebuilt their downtown areas after World War II using high-rise apartments on the retail district fringe to generate pedestrian shopping traffic.

Sometimes the size of the project requires federal participation. In Richmond, California, for example, the total cost exceeds \$7 million. It is being undertaken on a federal aid, three-for-one matching basis by the Richmond Redevelopment Agency. In California, incremental taxes — new ad valorem taxes generated by a redevelopment project area and resulting from an increment in increased valuations — may be irrevocably pledged to the payment of the costs of redevelopment.

Palo Alto, California, on the other hand, has plans for the private redevelopment of 76 acres of the business district of South Palo Alto. Because the Palo Alto program contains most of the elements of downtown planning discussed in this report, its objectives, techniques, and results thus far are presented in greater detail in Appendix D.

Mooresville, North Carolina, reports its urban renewal project will directly affect downtown redevelopment, if carried to fruition. The project involves redevelopment of a business block near the proposed mall area. Philadelphia's Park Towne Place, a 980-unit garden apartment project developed with an \$800,000 grant from the city, but involving no federal funds, has "eliminated a blighted area and served as a major stimulus in the revitalization of the adjacent downtown area." Cincinnati reports that an urban renewal project "will create new industrial and warehousing areas adjacent to the central business district. This will benefit the central business district significantly."

<sup>19</sup> "Top Banks Battle Over Rebuilding Milwaukee." *Business Week*, July 4, 1959, p. 92.

<sup>20</sup> *The New York Times*, June 29, 1959.



### City-Downtown Relations

It is clear the municipal government has a part to play in economic development of the community (see MIS Report No. 177, *The City's Role in Economic Development*, October, 1958). But, dealing with the downtown retail community presents special problems. For one thing, downtown improvements are more likely to be considered as special benefits for one segment of the community, since the benefits are not as easily discernible as, say, bringing a new industrial plant to town by means of an industrial development program.

Further, central business district improvements can be interpreted as benefits for one group of merchants as opposed to a group off the mall or in another section of town. Mercantile interests are not the only ones active downtown; other groups are concerned. Where the downtown business community has had poor public relations — where the consumer believes that prices are too high, that clerks are not courteous, that selection of goods is too limited — the problem of “doing something” for downtown becomes all the more difficult. Thus downtown redevelopment involves both a private public relations job and a public relations job on the part of the city. The city's degree of participation and the extent of its commitments should be made clear to the public. Equally important, is the presentation of reasons for city activity in downtown revitalization. “Ground rules” should be known by everyone. Unfortunately, there are not too many cities which have developed such ground rules in detail.

From the city's standpoint, effective public relations are vital. Newspapers, radio, television, and other media are interested in helping governmental and downtown groups tell the story of revitalization plans, how and why they were developed, and how they are to be carried out. Such publicity can give a tremendous boost to a program at the outset. But, as declining interest after a good start in several cities has demonstrated, publicity will not carry a project through by itself. Rather, it is the progress in carrying out the plans which will sustain the interest of newspaper readers and of radio and television audiences. These developing stories provide an opportunity to restate the methods and goals of the program.

Downtown revitalization, when it appears to be moving forward, has built-in news value. It is perhaps significant that some of the more recent mall proposals, such as those in Kalamazoo and Rochester, have been quickly followed by action.

Cooperation. There must be some reconciliation of opposing positions before the city can make use of its natural CBD advantages. What is the city's role? What is the CBD Merchant's role? Here are some abstracted comments on these questions:

Richmond, California. Ground rules have been laid by the plan [for downtown revitalization]. The city's role for the first couple of years will be only that of providing the legal framework under the provisions of the California Redevelopment Law, within which the plan may be effectuated. After its initial stages, it is expected that the city will divert some gas tax road improvement funds to street improvements which will facilitate easier traffic flow into and through the downtown area.

Raleigh, North Carolina. The position of the mayor and city council is that such a program should be carried forward and presented by the property owners, businesses and private people in the central business district with the aid and assistance of the city administration. An effort is being made to organize a downtown redevelopment group representing all elements of interest who would begin the process of establishing a program and procedure.

Portland, Maine. One of the most significant results of the Downtown Task Force [planning studies] has been to awaken interest in the urban renewal program which locally has suffered in the past for lack of any real tie to business leadership. Naturally this kind of program will not bear fruit overnight. I am of the mind that the support of the community's leadership is very much the first order of business, and this, I believe, our procedure has begun to affect. A concentrated effort to arouse the general public will proceed when an interim plan has been completed.

Springfield, Oregon. We are convinced that the impetus for a permanent mall should come not from the city government, but rather from the merchants and property owners. We have stated on several occasions that the city stands ready to do its share and to carry its load in any future development. This is somewhat of a “chicken or the egg” proposition. There are those who feel that the city should actually push downtown Springfield into the permanent mall. I will admit that someone has to provide sustained and aggressive leadership in



this direction, but unless a program like urban renewal is utilized, a large portion of the cost of the permanent mall will rest with the owners of the property. All of the leadership provided therefore would be of no avail until these people recognize the dire necessity for downtown reorganization.

Rock Island, Illinois. It is difficult for the city to lead the merchants into such a plan until more of them realize its need and value. The cities adopting permanent malls are perhaps more often driven to the measure by competition of new shopping centers or heavy loss of trade. The city did not attempt to establish ground rules from the first mall experiment. However, the lack of cooperation among property owners in backing the one-block permanent mall scheme gave rise to consideration for enabling legislation to condemn and acquire run-down commercial areas so that they could be revitalized.

### Conclusions

CBD revitalization is important for any city whose commercial base is being eroded by competition from shopping centers, downtown traffic strangulation, and deterioration of downtown properties. The downtown pedestrian mall is but one way of restoring the CBD's competitive position. The experience of cities submitting information for this report can best be summarized under the heading of "Public Support," "Planning," and "Development."

Public Support. All of the cities reporting recognize the need for support from the CBD merchant community, the public at large, and the city government.

1. Leadership. Both business and governmental leadership is needed in all phases of mall planning and development.

2. CBD Backing. The business community must support CBD revitalization both with money and other resources. Success appears most promising when a CBD organization is formed to present a unified community of interests. Even few dissenters can present a major barrier to action.

3. Opposition. Opposing interests should be recognized. Merchants located near but off the mall will be opposed. Truckers will resist restrictions on delivery hours or limitations on access to stores. Police officials and traffic engineers may discourage rerouting of traffic. Absentee owners of stores are likely to be indifferent because they feel they are already getting an adequate return on their property investment in the CBD.

4. Sustained Interest. Initially the city and the business community will have no difficulty in telling its story through newspapers and other available media. But downtown revitalization will not be achieved overnight, and this interest must be sustained. The city and CBD interests should work together in issuing progress reports and other news to retain public interest and support.

Planning. Most of the cities recognize the importance of CBD planning in relation to community planning and economic development.

1. Basic Planning. The pedestrian mall and other phases of CBD revitalization should be studied in relation to the comprehensive plan for the community.

The mall area must be relatively homogeneous so that stores cater to relatively leisurely shopping. Quick-stop stores (drugstores, gasoline service stations, and supermarkets) may lose business in a mall area. Conflicting land uses (especially industrial) must be minimized.

2. Economic Analysis. Economic base studies are needed to forecast the potential for commercial development (see MIS Report No. 177, *The City's Role in Economic Development*, October, 1958).

3. Traffic and Parking. Traffic rerouting will be needed and should be done in consultation with county and state highway officials. Certain legal steps will have to be followed if a state or federal highway route is rerouted.

Close-by, convenient, and ample auto parking space is a requirement. People are not inclined to walk more than 400 to 500 feet.

Trucks and emergency vehicles such as ambulances must have access to the mall area.



3. Urban Renewal. To the extent possible, CBD revitalization should be integrated with urban renewal planning. Urban renewal for blighted areas adjacent or contiguous to the CBD should be considered.

Development. At this point both municipal and private interests begin to work on legal considerations, financing, and actual physical development.

1. Stage Development. CBD revitalization is too expensive and time-consuming to be accomplished in a few weeks or months. The pedestrian mall may be a good starting point, but the total program should consider priorities, scheduling, and means of financing for urban renewal, expressways and arterial streets to go around the CBD, public transit improvements, public buildings, utility services, and nearby residential development.

2. Legal Questions. Street closings, municipal tort liability, and other legal questions should be anticipated and resolved.

3. Financing. City financial participation must be considered carefully. The cost to the city should be compared with the tax return from possible appreciated property values. Indirect benefits should be considered including employment in the CBD and the amenities of a pleasant urban center.

4. Municipal Services. The city government should exercise its normal responsibilities to encourage CBD stability. This includes good administration and enforcement of building, housing, and other codes; refuse collection; street cleaning; street lighting and other improvements; and traffic patrol and enforcement.

*Acknowledgements:* Grateful acknowledgement is made to the city officials, planning consultants, and representatives of private downtown development organizations who supplied first-hand information for this report. Special thanks are due also to the following persons who reviewed a tentative draft of this report: R. V. Terrill, city manager, Grand Haven, Michigan; Julian H. Orr, city manager, and Graham Finney, city planner, Portland, Maine; Gerald F. McMahon, assistant chief administrative officer, Fresno, California; C. A. Pitchford, assistant city manager, and Ernest W. Henderson, acting planning director, Richmond, California; C. H. Elliott, city manager, Kalamazoo, Michigan; and Vincent L. Lung, chief, Advance Plan Section, City Planning Division, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

*Note:* This report was prepared by Ned L. Wall, staff member, the International City Managers' Association.



## Appendix A

## PORTLAND, MAINE, SHOPPER MOTIVATION STUDY

The Downtown Task Force report of the Portland City Planning Commission measured the advantages and disadvantages of the CBD and competing commercial districts in outlying areas. Views of shoppers were gathered through interviews of a representative sample of shoppers. The list below represents a compilation of the first three responses of each shopper interviewed.

DowntownAdvantages

1. Larger selection of goods
2. Can do several errands
3. Stores close together
4. Cheaper prices
5. Convenient bus service
6. Enjoyable place to shop
7. Friendly service
8. Better delivery service

Disadvantages

Difficult parking  
Congested traffic  
Cost of bus service too high  
Too crowded  
Poor bus service  
Too far to go  
Takes too long to shop  
Unlisted factors

Outlying AreasAdvantages

1. Closer to home
2. Parking easy
3. Do not have to dress up
4. More convenient hours
5. Parking less expensive
6. Less crowded, less confusion
7. Friendly courteous clerks
8. Clean modern stores

Disadvantages

Lacks large selection  
Not all kinds of businesses  
Prices high  
Same old thing  
Poor bus service  
Bus fare too high  
Unlisted factors  
Poor delivery service



## Appendix B

## PLANNING PROCEDURES FOR MALL AREA, GRAND HAVEN, MICHIGAN

Recommendations covering points of particular study in planning and setting up a closed mall area, abstracted from a report of City Manager R. V. Terrill of Grand Haven, Michigan.

Planning. The following steps should be taken.

1. We would strongly advise an area be selected so that a minimum number of businesses could be expected to suffer a loss. Specifically we would try to avoid inclusion of auto-service establishments, quick-shopping stores, such as news stands, tobacco stores, businesses depending upon public transportation such as bus stations.
2. Ascertain in advance the exact number and identity of merchants within and near the mall who are favorable as well as those who are opposed to the plan, preferably obtaining written indications of opinion.
3. Review with the city attorney in detail all of the possible legal implications. In this connection we would raise the following questions: (1) proper procedures for closing the street, with or without objections, and the likelihood of a successful injunction action after the street is closed; (2) the question of liability in the mall area and the amount of liability coverage the city should carry; (3) extent to which store owners can use walk area for features not generally allowed and what limitations should be imposed on such use; and (4) the likelihood of a store, claiming loss of business, suing the city for damages, whether or not the merchant acquiesced in the first place; and (5) any other legal point applicable in the local situation.

Setting Up the Mall. When it has been decided to proceed, the city should:

1. Publicly outline the city's justification and objective in participating in downtown redevelopment. This is particularly necessary where the city has gone to any significant expense. Maximum publicity should be given to all meetings, discussions, official actions and other activities involving city officials, clarifying as far as possible the reasons. We would caution the administration not to expect universal approval, but to keep in mind that as in most cases, its strongest support lies in open honesty and sincerity.
2. We would alert the police department to the need for anticipation of changes in traffic patterns and parking requirements. Sign changes needed to implement the plan should be thought out. A study of traffic patterns should be made not only to expedite traffic flow, but also to be sure that this flow is not unnecessarily diverted away from businesses not within the mall.

Operating the Mall. Once the mall is in operation the city should be prepared to:

1. Maintain a close and continuing survey of mall effects, to reveal all advantages and disadvantages and how they might apply in other shopping areas within the city.
2. Keep constantly before the merchants in the mall area the fact that the city can participate in expense or other activity only insofar as it could justify such participation as a service to the general public.



## Appendix C

## SPECIAL ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES, KALAMAZOO AND ROYAL OAK, MICHIGAN

Following is a copy of the procedure prepared by John L. Saville, city assessor, Kalamazoo, Michigan, for special assessments to cover property owners share of the city's mall construction cost:

Through a resolution adopted June 8, 1959, the Kalamazoo City Commission by virtue of Section 113 (Charter) directed the city assessor to assess as provided therein "in accordance with the benefits to be derived. . . ." With due consideration the city assessor observed that the purpose lying behind the construction of the public improvement to be known as the "Burdick Street Mall Project" was indicative of the benefits to be derived therefrom.

As the purpose of this particular public improvement was based upon an economic necessity to sustain and improve an already declining valuation within the Central Business District it then evolves that the respective benefits to be derived would necessarily attach to the economic value of the parcels to be assessed.

The Mall, admittedly, represents a departure from the usual type of public improvement; its benefits would appear unique in that they provide an "exposure" of unimpeded pedestrian traffic. This element relates directly to volume in sales which, in turn, determines the value of land by capitalization of income. As current land values have already been properly established for those properties abutting the mall, and, in my opinion, represent a logical basis from which to determine an equitable apportionment of benefits to be derived, I have concluded these same benefits to be in proportion to the respective land values involved. Historically, whether by "benefit" or by "front-footage" special assessments of lands abutting a public improvement have been directed to land — exclusive of improvements thereon.

In reference to the widely publicized "Gruen Plan" (for Kalamazoo), in aspect the subject improvement is an initial phase of a series of malls. It should be noted, therefore, that those values attributable to "corner influence" were not included in the assessment of the present mall roll; this factor will be considered as the basis for the assessment of the same corners (now assessed) on proposed future improvements. Note: precedent of similarity — sewer assessments.

In summary, the total land value involved in the Special Mall Roll No. 1 amounted to \$6,366,370; the sound value of each parcel was computed to show its respective portion (percentagewise) of the whole and, in turn, that portion was multiplied by the \$30,000 to be assessed against the entire project. The result is recorded on the subject roll in the form of individual assessments.

I have, as near as may be, and according to my best judgment, conformed in all things to the directions contained in the resolution of the City Commission herein before referred to, and the Charter of the City relating to such assessments.

Special Assessment Formula For Redevelopment of the Royal Oak Central Business District

It is proposed the total cost of redevelopment of the Royal Oak Central Business District be spread on the land within the area to be redeveloped on a special assessment basis as follows:

1. One-half of the total cost to be spread on the basis of direct proportion to the land assessed valuations within the redevelopment area or special assessment district.
2. One-half of the total cost to be spread on the square-foot land area within the redevelopment area or special assessment district on the basis of its anticipated location value on completion of the redevelopment as follows:

First, all land will be evaluated on a percentage basis with the central location rated at 100% and reducing down to 60% as it moves away from the central location to the fringe of the area.



Second, each square foot of land area will be corrected on the basis of the pre-determined percentage value assigned to it.

Third, the second one-half of the total cost will then be spread on the basis of direct proportion to the corrected square-foot land area within the special assessment district.

Examples of the application of the recommended formula for the spreading of the special assessments to cover the total costs of the Redevelopment of Royal Oak's Central Business District:

1. One-half of the total cost shall be spread in direct proportion to the City Assessor's 1958 land assessed valuations within the area (not including building assessed evaluations).

As an example: if the total cost of redevelopment is \$3,000,000 then \$1,500,000 would be spread under this paragraph. Applying this, if the total of the 1958 land assessed valuations within "the area" was \$4,000,000 then each parcel would be assessed 37.5¢ for each \$1.00 of 1958 land assessed valuation which it carried.

Example: If the 1958 land assessment were \$40,000 on a given parcel of land, we would multiply \$40,000.00 x 37.5¢ equaling \$15,000.00 for this parcel's first one-half share of the \$3,000,000 special assessment. The 37.5¢ per \$1.00 is, of course, the same ratio as the first half of the special assessment in the amount of \$1,500,000 bears to \$4,000,000.00. Another way to present the same example is that the parcel of land assessed \$40,000 in 1958 carries 1% of the total \$4,000,000 land assessment. Therefore it will carry, for its first 1/2 of the special assessment 1% of \$1,500,000 which again is \$15,000.

By this method the relative value of all parcels within "the area" as of 1958, would be reflected in the assessment formula.

2. The other one-half of total costs shall be spread as follows: First, all land within the area shall be evaluated on the basis of its location value as of completion of the redevelopment plan, and in relation to all other land within "the area," with a rating of 100 for top location and graded down from there. Every square foot within "the area" shall then be multiplied by its rating, as determined in accord with the above, to obtain a corrected square-foot figure.

The total number of corrected square feet within "the area" shall then be determined and the same shall be divided into 1/2 the total cost of redevelopment to ascertain the amount that each corrected square foot of land shall be assessed, for this 1/2 of the total.

As an example, again if the total cost is \$3,000,000 then \$1,500,000 would be spread under the formula contained in this paragraph. Thus hypothetically, and assuming that "the area" contains a total of 1,000,000 square feet of land:

400,000 sq. ft. of 100 rated land	400,000 corrected sq. ft.
400,000 sq. ft. of 75 rated land	300,000 corrected sq. ft.
<u>200,000 sq. ft. of 50 rated land</u>	<u>100,000 corrected sq. ft.</u>
1,000,000 total square feet	800,000 corrected sq. ft.

"The area" would then have a total of 800,000 corrected square feet. Therefore this \$1,500,000 of assessment would be spread at the rate of \$1.875 per corrected square foot.

Further example would be a 20' by 100' parcel rated 75. This would have a total of 2,000 sq. ft. and a corrected total of 1,500 sq. ft. This corrected total of 1,500 sq. ft. would be multiplied by \$1.875 for a total of \$2,812.50 for this one-half of the assessment. By the same example, if this parcel were rated 100 it would carry \$3,750 of assessment.

By adding a given parcel 1/2 share of the special assessment as determined under paragraph A above to its second 1/2 share as determined under paragraph B above, we arrive at the total amount of the special assessment spread against each parcel.



## Appendix D

## SOUTH PALO ALTO PLANNING PROGRAM, PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA

(This description was prepared for MIS by Leon Rimov of the planning and architectural firm of Schmidts, Hardman and Wong, Berkeley 2, California. This group is providing over-all planning for the project.)

The California Avenue plan and program is designed to rebuild an area of approximately 76 acres. Involved is the revitalization of both commercial and residential buildings in South Palo Alto, California.

This program is basically an urban renewal project by private enterprise. Jerome Keithley, Palo Alto city manager, has stated, "Although the key to the success of this program is the action which private enterprise will take, the City's contribution is vital, and the City must encourage private enterprise to take the lead in rebuilding obsoletely developed or poorly planned commercial areas."

A number of things have been accomplished during the past thirteen months since the program was first initiated:

1. A nonprofit foundation has been formed to spearhead planning and financial programming of public and private investments.
2. New stores are being attracted to complement those facilities already in the area.
3. Land in private ownership is being assembled without the use of eminent domain.
4. The County of Santa Clara is planning a \$2,500,000 office building. Construction is expected to commence this September.
5. A parking district has been created for the purpose of providing free, off-street parking lots. Its bonds have been sold and a number of free parking lots are already in use.
6. The city has responded to the need for strong code enforcement and numerous substandard dwellings have been designated for early removal. In addition, the planning commission and the city council have amended the zoning ordinance so as to encourage, rather than restrict, efforts to build high-rise apartments and multistory offices.
7. A number of major streets are to be widened, small alleys will be closed and in some instances, utility lines rerouted to best serve the future needs of the area.
8. A \$1,500,000 grade separation is now under construction which will link the residential foothill area with the San Francisco-San Jose freeway. Its completion will aid the merchants on California Avenue by rerouting the traffic adjacent to, rather than through the retail area.
9. Stanford's Industrial Park development program has switched to high gear. Its purpose is to attract "High I.Q." light industrial and manufacturing firms.

A step-by-step plan was prepared to include such things as:

1. City and county land uses over the past ten years, taxation trends for the City and County.
2. City and county capital improvement programming plans for streets, highways and utility expansion.
3. An analysis of commercial land uses, occupancies, leasing procedures and merchandising operation.
4. An exhaustive retail analysis and appraisal of merchandising facilities.
5. An analysis of construction costs, financing and building procedures in the area.
6. Formation of a parking and public transportation program.



7. An extensive public relations, education, advertising and promotion program.

Some of the basic objectives included:

1. The project area should consist of interrelated and complementary high- and low-rise residential, retail, office and professional structures. Architecture has been considered as an integral part of zoning and land use.
2. A visually attractive environment had to be developed which would stabilize retail operations and serve as a pattern for attracting future progressive outlets of the stature and type indicated by the field survey.
3. Adopt a program which would tend to prevent further development of unrelated physical and economic activities within the newly established land uses for the area.
4. Only those land uses and retail activities which were compatible would be permitted to locate in the area. Sociological as well as economic factors were recognized as playing an important role in today's retail operations.
5. Both public and private buildings should relate to the suburban character of Palo Alto.
6. This redevelopment plan should be privately financed and administered calling upon public agencies for public actions only at such times as assistance is necessary to implement planned parking, utility, traffic or zoning changes.

Detailed economic research and physical planning were interrelated throughout the entire plan and program. Thus the final plan was the result of knowing the expressions of individual needs and aspirations, the mercantile tempo, the obligations of government and the unused and undeveloped assets of the area and community.

Perhaps the most priceless ingredient of all was the desire and will of property owners, merchants, city officials, and industrialists to see this program brought about to its present position.











